

FETP NEWSLETTER

May 2020

A Special Edition Highlighting
the Role of FETPs in the
COVID-19 Response

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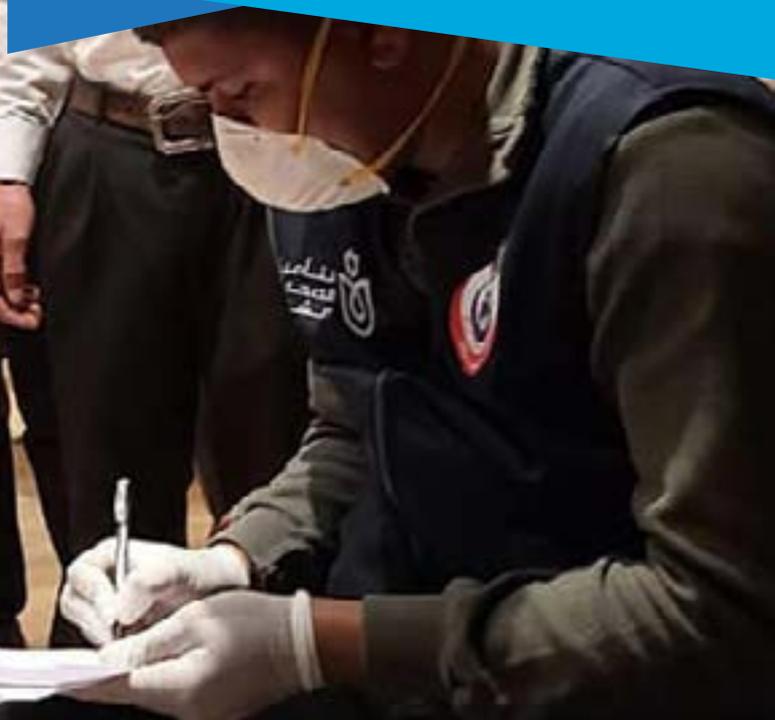
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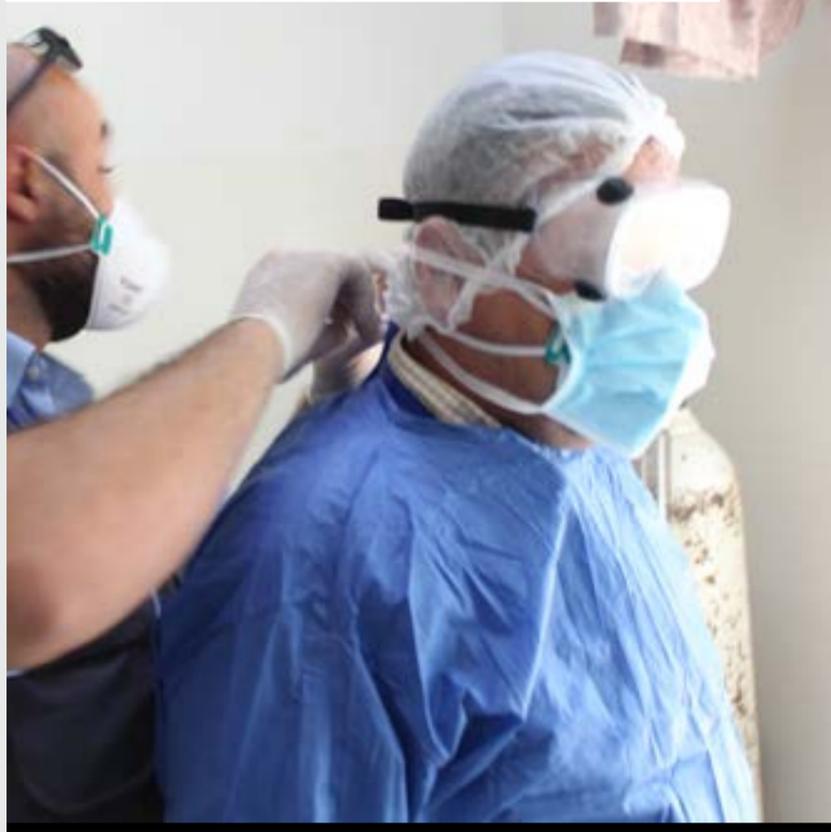
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Editors Letter



Dear Readers,

As the world continues to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic and global efforts are in full force to alleviate the effects this outbreak has on the lives of people, the welfare of communities, and the prosperity of global economics, Field Epidemiology Training Programs' residents and graduates have proven to be an instrumental force contributing to this cause.

Since the start of the outbreak, they have worked within their countries' health systems to contribute positively to better health. Whether they were involved in risk communications, or were working within rapid response teams, or within any other capacity, they have proven to be invaluable through their relentless dedication. Therefore, it is only fitting for the second issue of our FETP newsletter to serve as a tribute for all their hard work. This issue is about the FETPs in the EMR and their contribution to COVID-19 responses.

In the sections that follow you can read

more about each country program and its involvement in COVID-19, and for our feature article you can read more about the pandemic itself.

Happy Reading
Editorial Team



FEATURE STORY



The COVID-19 pandemic originated in Wuhan, China early December 2019, and was first declared a Public Health Emergency of International Concern by the World Health Organization (WHO) on January 30 2020. Then, as cases continued to rise in numbers, it was declared a pandemic on March 11 2020 . According to the WHO and as of May 13 2020, more than 4.26 million cases of COVID-19 have been reported in over 187 countries and territories. The pandemic also resulted in more than 291,000 deaths, while more than 1.49 million people have recovered.

According to UN News, it is predicted that the COVID-19 Pandemic is set to cause the largest global recession since the Great Depression of the 1920s. Furthermore, the pandemic has led to the postponement or cancellation of sporting, religious, political and cultural events across the globe. From another angle, the pandemic has instigated widespread supply shortages and yet on a positive note it has also decreased emissions of pollutants and greenhouse gases. Taking its toll on education, the pandemic has also caused schools, universities, and colleges to close down in 190 countries around the world, thus affecting approximately 73.5 per cent of the world's student population.



“the COVID-19 Pandemic is set to cause the largest global recession since the Great Depression of the 1920s “



COVID-19 IN THE EMR

In the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMR), all 22 countries have been affected by COVID-19. This fact presents further challenges to the EMR, a region already struggling with socio, political, and economical unrest. Challenges to effectively respond to the pandemic where also brought on by gaps in countries' health care systems and their emergency preparedness and response capacities in addition to the many public health problems that continue to prevail. On February 15, 2020, Egypt was the second country in the region to report COVID-19 cases while the first cases came from the African

continent. On February 20, 2020 two cases were confirmed by the Islamic Republic of Iran, bringing the total COVID-19 confirmed cases in the region to 12. Following these beginnings, the spread of the pandemic continued to affect all EMR countries. By April 11, 2020 Yemen was the last country to report its COVID-19 case, thus bringing the total number of reported confirmed cases in the region to 115,824 with the highest reported in Iran. By that time, Iran had reported 77,995 (67.4%) with a total deaths of 5,662 (4.9%).

FETPS PLAY A PIVOTAL ROLE IN COVID-19 RESPONSES

Aligned with the Field Epidemiology Training Programs (FETPs) purpose to increase epidemiological capacities within their countries' public health workforce, FETP residents and graduates continue to play an instrumental role in their country responses to COVID-19.

Since the onset of the pandemic, FETP residents and graduates from the EMR have been involved in activities pertaining to strengthening their countries' health system to detect, notify, report and respond to COVID-19 and they have also worked to mitigate national and international threats to public health.

Being embedded within the ministries of health, national public health institutes, and other public health agencies,

the FETPs in Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Egypt, Iraq, Jordan, KSA, Pakistan Morocco, Sudan, Tunisia, and Yemen have been deeply involved in actions responding to COVID-19, including case investigations, points of entry/arrivals screening, isolation protocols, transferring cases, risk communication, and the conducting of training sessions relevant to country needs.

FETP TESTIMONIALS

"COVID-19 pandemic was a great opportunity for me to practice field epidemiology, it was a unique experience for me. In fighting this disease. This crisis let me know myself more. It made me work well under pressure, and it gave me the chance to learn how to communicate well with the patients and how to get the information I need effectively"

DR YAMAMAH AL-HMAID, SECOND YEAR RESIDENT-FETP JORDAN



in such instances, EMPHNET is also launching several initiatives that increase the visibility of FETPs and that serve to highlight their role in this pandemic such as the Voices from the Field initiative.

As the world continues to fight this pandemic, the FETPs have made their mark as an invaluable resource serving their countries and their public health systems.

EMPHNET Responding to the Pandemic

As a regional network, EMPHNET, has been playing an active role in supporting the FETPs across the EMR in their efforts to combat COVID-19 threats. On the technical level, EMPHNET's Public Health Emergency Management Center (PHEMC) has been the hub for collecting technical information from the programs, disseminating relevant information, and coordinating response efforts.

EMPHNET has also been escalating efforts and activities to support countries in the EMR in preparedness and response to the COVID-19 ha. It has been achieving this role through the dissemination promotional material (leaflets and brochures), dissemination of guidelines, the regular sharing of technical updates, and developing case studies on COVID-19, and rapid response team training.

Believing that the sharing of relevant knowledge is the key in such instances, EMPHNET has also activated its networking platform EpiShares (www.epishares.net) to its full capacity for this cause. Not only has it created a page titled "COVID-19 Updates" to post hourly updates on the virus and its spread, but it has also created a private group titled "FETP Professionals" which serves as a space for FETP directors, advisors, and coordinators to discuss key issues of concern in this regard. The group also allows its members to upload documents, and it is a space for sharing meeting minutes, meeting agendas, and activities planned in response to the outbreak.

Also in the area of knowledge sharing, EMPHNET also produced daily news round-up that it disseminates widely. The purpose of this update is to provide authentic news and to ensure that it is filtered from the rumors that are provided by crowdsourced news platforms. Believing in the significance of FETPs and their work



COVID-19 Dashboard

EMPHNET has created a live dashboard to follow the latest information and measures regarding COVID-19 outbreak in the EMR.

COVID-19 Dashboard provides many valuable insights specific to the EMR with daily updates to help monitor and track the changes imbued by policies and behaviours which can help learn from the different experiences shared in the region.

<https://bit.ly/3ewtBwA>

FETP AFGHANISTAN

FETP AFGHANISTAN RESIDENTS AND GRADUATES RESPOND TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Since the pandemic's earliest stages, graduates of the formerly active advanced-level FETP Tajik-Afghan, as well as current residents of the intermediate-level FETP Afghanistan, have been involved in conducting surveillance activities for COVID-19. Their involvement came as part of national disease surveillance response efforts (NDSR) in Kabul. These efforts further extended to other provinces including Balkh, Kandahar, Laghman, Baghlan, Sarepul, Kunduz, and Samangan.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Ministry of Public Health



consolidated efforts with the Emergency High Council Committee, and it formed an intersectoral committee under the leadership of the Minister of Public Health. This committee has also been involved in Case Management, Surveillance, Data management, Risk Communication, and other areas.

FETP Afghanistan residents and graduates are to date involved in screening activities. They are also involved in data collection, management, and analysis, and risk communications. More specifically, residents are instrumental to the health sectors in several provinces alongside FETP graduates who are taking on various leading roles.



FETP TESTIMONIALS



"As a new trained field epidemiologist, when I first heard about COVID-19 outbreak in Wuhan China, I wished I could have been there and helped them to control the outbreak using the knowledge and skills I got from field epidemiology. It did not take long and the virus spread to my country and province and soon due to local spread of the virus more people got infected. The spread of the virus and the resultant panic left all provincial health staff confused. Using my learning from Field Epidemiology Training Program I provided solutions for Sarepol provincial health team"

DR. ABDUL SHAKOUR KARIMI -FETP AFGHANISTAN GRADUATE

FETP AFGHANISTAN LAUNCH SEVERAL ACTIVITIES TO RAISE COMMUNITY AWARENESS ON COVID-19 ENGAGEMENT



FETP Afghanistan residents and graduates have also been actively involved in community outreach and awareness activities.



FETP AFGHANISTAN WIN TWO OUT OF THREE AWARDS AT TEPHINET PHOTO CONTEST

On a different note, we congratulate FETP Afghanistan for winning the first and second place awards of the 2020 TEPHINET Photo Contest which was originally set for EIS International Nights. Although the conference was canceled due to the COVID-10 pandemic, the photo contest still took place on TEPHINET's Facebook.

The winning photo for the contest was taken by Dr : Abdul Shakour Karimi, Afghanistan FETP. The photo was captioned “ Transferring polio vaccine by motorbike to remote areas

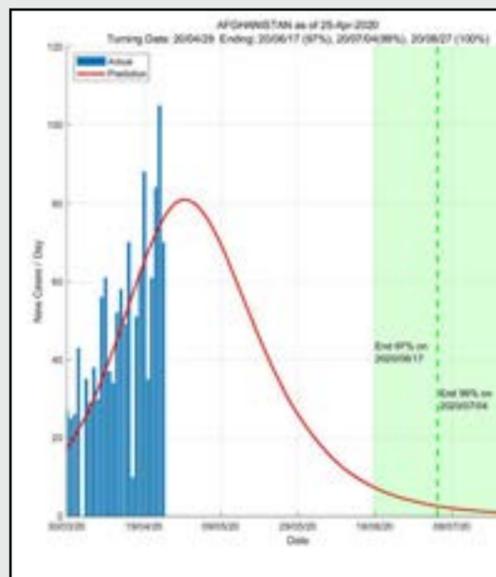
The photo winning second place was taken by FETP Afghanistan resident Dr Abdul Shakour Karimi, Afghanistan FETP. The caption reads “ Distribution of materials by “wagon driver boys” for a polio vaccination campaign”



FETP AFGHANISTAN HAS ANALYZED LATEST STUDY BY SINGAPORE UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY AND DESIGN (SUTD)

FETP Afghanistan's residents and graduates have been using the program's Facebook page as a hub for disseminating knowledge. Interesting updates from the page include: a recent analysis of a study that was conducted by the Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD) . The study predicted that the coronavirus crisis will peak in Afghanistan by end of this April and will be ended (97%) by second week of June 2020.

According to researchers, the study was based on official data provided by a number of countries around the world to estimate the key dates of transition during the pandemic life cycle curve. The visual representation of this study can be seen below



FETP AFGHANISTAN MANAGES THE SCIENCE, EPIDEMIOLOGY AND RESEARCH (SER) COMMITTEE TO FIGHT COVID-19

For the last month and a half, FETP Afghanistan residents and graduates have been managing the Science, Epidemiology and Research (SER) Committee to fight COVID-19. The committee holds regular meetings every other day online via WebEx (facilitated by WHO) and it produces weekly meeting minute and policy briefs on very important and relevant topics. To date, it has issued policy briefs on the following topics:

- Policy for Mandatory Use of Masks in public settings in Afghanistan
- Policy on strengthening strategies to fight COVID-19 in Afghanistan
- Policy Health Care Providers Protection and Support COVID-19 Pandemic in Afghanistan
- Policy MHPSS-Response To COVID-19 in Afghanistan
- Policy on COVID-19 Testing in Afghanistan
- Policy on Impact of COVID-19 on Gender Afghanistan
- Policy brief on role of private sector in fight to COVID-19 in Afghanistan



FETP BANGLADESH FETP BANGLADESH RESIDENTS AND GRADUATES RESPOND TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND OTHER AREAS

One Health Bangladesh Launches Special Webinar Series for COVID-19

One Health Bangladesh, a multidisciplinary platform dealing with the health threats at the human-animal and environmental interface in Bangladesh, is currently holding a series of webinars in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. These webinars are being organized in collaboration with GHD/EMPHNET

The rationale behind organizing such initiatives is that the COVID-19 pandemic is continuing to spread across the world and with its spread it continues to take lives. South Asian countries, including Bangladesh, are facing tremendous challenges when tackling its subsequent health threats. Therefore, access to the right information is crucial for preventing a parallel pandemic of misinformation.

The webinars are all interactive, and they feature renowned speakers from around the globe. The series kicked off on May 4 2020, with a Webinar titled “Preparedness and Response to COVID-19 and its Impact”. Following its success, a second webinar was scheduled for the following week. The webinar was titled “What We Know and Don’t Know About SARS COV-2 and COVID-19”

The third webinar in the series was titled “What is Working and What is Not Working in Tackling COVID-19”, and the series is still to continue.

To stay updated about the next and other announcements of webinars in the series visit our networking platform EpiShares www.epishares.net, or our website www.emphnet.net.



ONE HEALTH BANGLADESH LAUNCHES SPECIAL WEBINAR SERIES FOR COVID-19

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**Bangladesh One Health
Special Webinar Series
announcement featuring
Prof Meerjady Sabrina Flora
and Dr. Muhammad Al Nsour**

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FETP TESTIMONIALS

“We made a plan to confront an expected outbreak and we developed a strategy which included taking data from airports, borders to Track, Trace and Test (TTT). Then we developed a Hospital Triage consisting of a treatment center with 800 beds (Hospital, field hospital), and an isolation center with 400 beds and 1476 quarantine beds. Lockdown and partial lockdown was implemented according to the number of patients from a specific area. March 16 was a terrible day for us when a traveler from Spain came with fever into my city Gujrat. The traveler was isolated first and then tested for COVID-19. The results were positive and the traveler was shifted to Aziz Bhatti Shaheed teaching hospital (ABSTH) Gujrat, we traced all of his contacts and all were tested”

DR. AYAZ NASIR CHOCHAN-FETP PAKISTAN GRADUATE

BANGLADESH FETPV HOLDS INTRODUCTORY COURSE ON FIELD EPIDEMIOLOGY FOR VETERINARIANS

In Q1 2020, the Department of Livestock Services (DLS) and the, Chattogram Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (CVASU), with support from GHD/EMPHNET organized a 10-day introductory training session on field epidemiology for veterinarians with ten veterinarians in attendance. The objective of the training was to familiarize participants with the basic skills and tools needed for the practice of veterinary field epidemiology. This training will enable participants to act as a frontline workforce at their respective workstations.

The training sessions comprised 25 presentations, 12 scenario-based exercises, one field trip focusing on field disease investigation, and a session in which participants presented findings from the field trip. At the end of the course, six residents were selected for the Advanced FETP-V program for Bangladesh



MEMBER OF FRONTLINE WORKFORCE PARTICIPATES IN CHICKEN MORTALITY IN ROHINGYA CAMP

Introductory training participant Dr. Syed Hossain attended an unknown disease investigation of chicken mortality in the largest refugee camp in Bangladesh. The Department of Livestock Services in collaboration with the Emergency Center for Transboundary Animal Disease of FAO, was carrying out the investigation. As a member of the frontline workforce, Dr Hossain participated in the outbreak investigation using the participatory disease investigation approach.

Samples from sick chicken were collected and tested for avian influenza and New Castle disease and the rapid test revealed negative results for highly pathogenic influenza, further investigations were conducted in the central disease investigation laboratory.



FETP EGYPT

FETP EGYPT RESIDENTS AND GRADUATES CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENHANCEMENT OF NATIONAL ELECTRONIC SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM (NEDSS)

FETP Egypt residents and graduates participated in efforts made towards the enhancement of the National Electronic Surveillance System NEDSS through different activities. They contributed to updating and developing the COVID-19 Standard Case Definition in accordance with the WHO guidelines. To date, they have been constantly monitoring the spectrum of clinical symptoms as cases arise. To this end, they analyze relevant data.

From another angle, FETP residents and graduates have also participated in informing Health care workers (in public and private hospitals about the eligibility criteria of COVID-19



suspicion, while COVID-19 case definitions are always distributed across all health directorates, districts, as well as public and private hospitals. FETP Egypt has also been active in activities pertaining to the safe transfer of cases to the mentioned hospitals. This is done in coordination with the Emergency Operating Center (EOC) at the Ministry Of Health And Population (MoHP).

FETP EGYPT RESIDENTS AND GRADUATES CONDUCTED SPECIFIC TRAINING SESSIONS ON THE USE OF UPDATED CASE DEFINITION

FETP residents and graduates participated in conducting specific training sessions for health care workers on the use of case definitions, how to identify suspected cases on a clinical basis, initiate early case management, and infection prevention measures in health facilities. From another angle, surveillance officers were trained on how to report suspected and confirmed COVID-19 cases through the updated NEDSS after adding COVID-19 to the list of the notifiable diseases. They are also trained on how to conduct contact tracing of confirmed case of COVID-19. Both public and private sectors are involved in these specific trainings.



FETP EGYPT RESIDENTS AND GRADUATES PARTICIPATE IN THE QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS OF COVID-19 SURVEILLANCE DATA

FETP residents and graduates at all levels (national, regional and local levels) participated in the quantitative analysis of COVID-19 surveillance data

to early detect any outbreaks or clusters of COVID-19 cases. They also monitored the global trends and mortality through the WHO website. The results of their analysis have been distributed to health authorities to guide their collaboration between the Egyptian MoHP, Eastern Mediterranean Public Health Network (EMPHNET) and WHO; 28 RRT were trained for emerging diseases including the respiratory disease outbreak and cluster investigation. They were also trained to use the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) properly. They were prepared for just this situation and they provided the timely response needed at across all Egyptian Governorates. A number of FETP fellows are members of RRT at the national and subnational levels and they are racing against the spread of COVID-19 across Egyptian governorates through the following activities: A. Simulation Exercise to check the country's Readiness to deal with COVID-19 Imported Cases Upon directives of President Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi; the Egyptian government took all necessary measures to evacuate Egyptians in Wuhan who wish to return to Egypt. The Egyptian MoHP conducted a simulation exercise before their arrival at one of the Egyptian airports to check the country's readiness to deal with any patient who might test positive for the COVID-19.

FETP EGYPT RESIDENTS AND GRADUATES MAKE THEIR MARK IN THE AREA OF RAPID RESPONSE

FETP residents and graduates contributed to the evacuation of citizens from from Wuhan whereby a plane was dispatched to the city, where over 400 Egyptian citizens were living. The vast majority opted to return to Egypt while others chose to stay. However, to prevent the possibility of an outbreak in Egypt, the MoPH established a preventive measure plan, following the guidelines of the WHO, which included self-sterilized ambulances at the airport's entries and quarantine for all passengers as well as flight crew members and the accompanying medical team. FETP residents and graduates participated in the supervision of infection control and preventive measures taken during this

mission.

They also followed up with the evacuees over a 14-day Period and they participated in supervision of infection control and preventive measures taken during this mission From another angle, they also participated in the Investigation of COVID-19 cases in a Nile Cruise Ship, whereby a Taiwanese tourist of American origins had tested positive for COVID-19 more than two weeks after returning from a Nile cruise trip in Luxor Governorate.



All confirmed cases were isolated and treatment, and infection control and preventive measures were applied in all Nile cruise ships, hotels and airports at Luxor and Aswan governorates.

FETP RESIDENTS AND GRADUATES GET ACTIVE IN THE AREAS OF RISK COMMUNICATION AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Involvement as members of the national risk communication team, the FETP residents and graduates, coordinate with partner agencies to support MoPH to ensure effective

communication as needed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The FETP was also involved in developing timely and transparent communication messaging and materials for public use regarding

COVID-19, the FETP has also been involved in community awareness campaigns and activities.



FETP Egypt Produces COVID-19 Newsletter

We congratulate FETP Egypt for publishing its COVID-19 Newsletter. To read more about the residents and graduates' activities, please

[click Here](#)

FETP IRAQ NEWS

THE MOPH IRAQ PLAYS PIVOTAL ROLE IN DISSEMINATING INFORMATION

Throughout the pandemic FETP Iraq has been playing a pivotal role in disseminating information both to public health officials and the general public. One product of its dissemination efforts is comes in the form of a periodic situation report.

The report contains analysis of the pandemic's spread in Iraq, the spread of the pandemic by province, and more statistical representations.

FETP Iraq has also contributed to activating an emergency center and FETP it has also conducted other meetings with other partners since the first stages of the pandemic's spread.

The last of these reports can be accessed [here](#)

FET JORDAN NEWS

FETP JORDAN IN THE FIELD

Since the start of the pandemic, FETP Jordan has conducted many workshops in coordination with the Communicable Disease Directorate within the Jordan Ministry of Health. During these workshops many topics related to COVID-19 were discussed, such as the suspected and confirmed cases, lab exams, contact tracing and management of cases.

Work was also done with 12 residents and 20 graduates at the Queen Alia International Airport prior to the shutting down of boarders.

This work covered the screening of arrivals from hotspots and transferring suspected/confirmed cases to a designated hospital. They were also involved in filling forms

with information about travelers' addresses and other data that may be helpful in the future.

Jordan FETP has also been involved in the development of communication materials including brochures and posters. This has been done through the Ministry of Health in cooperation with the EMPHNET.

Now FETP Jordan residents and graduates are heavily involved in the field with other public health professionals with the Epidemiological Surveillance and Investigation teams currently working to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in Jordan.



FETP KSA NEWS

Since the start of the pandemic, FETP Saudi was engaged as a member of the National Command and Control Center (NCCC), Saudi Center for Disease Control and Prevention (Saudi CDC). Residents and graduates have been involved in risk assessment and preparedness activities to handle the outbreak. FETP staff assisted in writing local guidelines and protocols for health professionals, including screening guidelines. Furthermore, residents and FETP supervisors are also expected to participate in surveillance and field monitoring or investigation activities.

FETP-KSA PUBLICATIONS

We are proud to announce that FETP KSA had also released several publications during this time. The titles of these published papers are listed below



1. The Prediction for Development of COVID-19 in Global Major Epidemic Areas Through Empirical Trends in China by Utilizing State Transition Matrix Model
2. Analysis of Death Risk Factors Among 200 COVID-19 Patients in Wuhan, China: A Hospital-Based Case-Cohort Study
3. Exploring the Law of Development and Prognostic Factors of Common and Severe COVID-19: A Retrospective Case-Control Study in 122 Patients with Complete Course of Disease
4. Prediction of the Number of New Cases of 2019 Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Using a Social Media Search Index
5. Predicting COVID-19 Using Hybrid AI Model
6. The Effect of Control Strategies that Reduce Social
7. Mixing on Outcomes of the COVID-19 Epidemic in Wuhan, China
8. Transmission Dynamics of COVID-19 in Mainland China: Impact of Public Health Control Measures
9. Use of a Community-Based Cohort for Rapid and Repeated Assessments of Public Knowledge, Perceptions and Behaviours During the Evolving COVID-19 Outbreak in Singapore
10. Epidemiological and Clinical Features of 200 Hospitalized Patients with Corona Virus Disease 2019 in Yichang, China: A Descriptive Study
11. Clinical Strategies of Obstetric Emergency and Changes of Delivery Under COVID-19 Epidemic Situation: A Retrospective Study
12. Trend of the Coronavirus Disease-2019 Epidemic in
13. Prevalence of Acute Kidney Injury in Severe and Critical COVID-19 Patients in Wuhan, China
14. Modelling-Based Evaluation of the Effect of Quarantine Control by the Chinese Government in the Coronavirus Disease 2019 Outbreak
15. COVID-19 Wenzhou Community Based Isolation Strategy for Controlling the Novel Coronavirus Pneumonia Epidemic
16. Health, Distress and Life Satisfaction of People in China One Month into the COVID-19 Outbreak
17. China After the Lockdown of Wuhan City on January 23, 2020

FETP MOROCCO NEWS

FETP MOROCCO GETS ACTIVE IN RESPONDING TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC

With the announcement of the outbreak in China, 167 Moroccans were repatriated from Wuhan and placed under observation for 20 days in a hospital in the east of Morocco. Graduates from FETP Morocco instantly got involved in many activities both at the central and regional level. In the Epidemiology Central Unit of the Ministry of Health. They were mobilized and deeply involved in analyzing data. At those initial stages, they also got involved in communicating, writing procedures and guidelines and coordinating activities particularly with laboratories and external authorities. Within the local units of epidemiology and border crossing points, they contributed to the surveillance and medical control in accordance with the national orientations.

FETP graduates have prepared materials while highlighting the need for sharing knowledge and material between different countries.

LAUNCHING THE COVID-19 PLATFORM AND VIDEO

The National School of Public Health in Morocco had also launched a platform that hosts over 700 documents related to COVID-19, including audio and video documents. The platform may be accessed via www.covidaba.com. For easy use. Finally, FETP Morocco also highlighted the achievements of residents and graduates using video.

To view the video and the website click on the images below



FETP TESTIMONIALS

"On March 17, 2020 airports in Jordan were closed and all arrivals were quarantined Amman and Dead Sea hotels. At that point, my work was transferred to the hotels to follow up with people coming from abroad and to perform the necessary checks for them in case of any symptoms. My experience with Covid-19 did not end until this moment, but it showed me how small the world is, and that the condition that is of greater danger to humanity is not caused by weapons of mass destruction or nuclear bombs, but it may be disease X."

DR. KHALID ABEDNASSER MOHAMMAD ABU AJAMEYEH, SECOND YEAR RESIDENT FETP JORDAN

FELTP PAKISTAN NEWS

FELTP PAKISTAN RESPONDS TO COVID-19 PANDEMIC



Residents and graduates of FELTP Pakistan are at the forefront of the government's response to the COVID-19 outbreak. The FELTP-DSRUs are being utilized by the national and provincial health departments to carry out surveillance activities regarding COVID-19 cases in the country. The FELTP residents and graduates are leading the case detection, case notification, contact tracing, testing and case management along with national and international partners.

As early as January 2020, FELTP graduates at the National Institute of Health

(NIH) Islamabad activated the Emergency Operations Cell (EOC). They prepared advisories and guidelines for COVID-19 preparedness and response at the national level.

At the provincial level, the health departments notified the FELTP-trained Technical Support Officers (TSOs) at the Disease Surveillance and Response Units (DSRUs) as the focal persons for COVID-19. The FELTP team was also included in the national core committee for COVID-19.



FELTP PAKISTAN LEADS RRT TRAINING

The FELTP became the provincial hub for Rapid Response Training. These training sessions were conducted all over Pakistan and health staff were trained on screening at the entry points. This training was especially deemed important because of shared borders between the country and China.

FELTP residents and graduates contributed to formulating case definitions as well as provincial disease surveillance of regional units. They have also been working with hospitals to develop isolation and infection control protocols.



FELTP graduates also lead Infection Control training sessions at all the major hospitals in their respective provinces.

FETP SUDAN NEWS

FETP SUDAN CONTRIBUTES TO COVID-19 RESPONSES IN SUDAN

In March 2020, Sudan FETP in collaboration with the Sudan Medical Specialization Board conducted an orientation session on COVID-19 targeting doctors of different specialties. The session included an introduction to COVID-19, a rundown of preventative measures to be taken, and a Q&A session. Participants also received pamphlets containing more information about the pandemic.



Twelve FETP graduates also worked in the areas of outbreak surveillance and rapid response under the health ministries' umbrella. They were actively involved in preparation efforts for Sudanese expected to return from China.



The program was also supported by EMPHNET in printing and distributing promotional materials about COVID-19. From another angle, the FETP Director lead the efforts regarding COVID-19 as Director of Health Emergency and Epidemic Control Directorate at Federal Ministry of Health.

The program also conducted a series of training sessions with support from EMPHNET. These sessions covered risk communication amongst other areas of response.



FETP TUNISIA NEWS

FETP TUNISIA RESPONDS TO COVID-19

FETP Tunisia has been actively responding to the pandemic. Residents and graduates activated and adapted preparedness and response plans and crisis communication strategy to COVID-19. They have also adapted the SOPs and communication materials fitting for effective risk communications and they established operational teams (rapid response teams) with the implication of Tunisian FETP graduates in the whole process (surveillance, screening, contact tracing, health education, training on infectious disease prevention and control, etc.). They have also developed a set of training materials and have been implementing training activities at the national and regional levels.

Furthermore, FETP Tunisia Director Dr. Nissaf Bou Afif gained recognition in the media for all her and her team's efforts in combating the pandemic. She was also awarded on labour day for her dedication and hard work.

FETP YEMEN NEWS

FETP YEMEN RESPONDS TO COVID-19

Yemen FETP was involved in assessing the national capacity for responding to COVID-19 and results of this assessment were presented to public health officials. Then, FETP Residents and graduates also translated WHO guidelines to Arabic for easier access and use. However, Yemen faces additional challenges due to war and conflict.



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